

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes October 4, 2005

The Edgefield County Council held its regular meeting at 6:00 P. M. on Tuesday, October 4, 2005, in the County Council Chambers, 225 Jeter Street in Edgefield.

Members present

C. Monroe Kneece, Chairman
Willie C. Bright, Vice Chairman
Norman Dorn, Councilman
Joel D. Hudson, Councilman
B. Everette Kitchens, Councilman

Others present

Wayne Adams, County Administrator
John F. Byrd, Jr., County Attorney
Barbara R. Stark, Clerk to Council
and others as per list attached

Chairman Kneece called the meeting to order and Councilman Hudson gave the invocation, after which all recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes

Councilman Bright moved for approval of the September 6, 2005, Regular Meeting of Council, and the September 16, 2005, Called Meeting of Council; Councilman Hudson seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Reports

Councilman Dorn asked for an explanation of Report No. 6, Edgefield County's participation in the 8-hour Ozone Early Action Process. Mr. Adams stated that it is a volunteer program for advanced compliance with some of the emissions laws and that virtually all SC counties are participating. .

Councilman Kitchens referred to the Planning Commission Minutes of August 11, 2005, under Reports. He asked whether Sweetwater Road zoning was stagnant at this time. Mr. Kitchens said that he would like to know what the Planning Commission plans to do about that. This issue, he said, has been going on for a long time. Chairman Kneece asked Howard Gibson to address this matter. Mr. Gibson stated that he and Guy Mueller (zoning administrator) are, at the Planning Commission's request, working to develop a zoning district that is between GD and RD, in terms of its permitted uses. That will be on the (Planning Commission's) agenda for discussion.

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes

October 4, 2005

Mr. Gibson stated that some property owners from Martintown Road have shown interest in this, as well as a group from Plum Branch Road. As far as the actual action on Sweetwater Road, the Planning Commission hopes to get started again this month.

Ordinances

Councilman Bright moved for approval of third reading of Ordinance No. 05-06-568, "An Ordinance Amending Title 51 of the Edgefield County Code of Ordinances to Provide for the Administration and Collection of Solid Waste User Charges." Before a second to his motion, Councilman Hudson stated that he knew some dwellings in certain areas in the North Augusta City limits are not assessed household waste fees. The administrator stated the reason for this is that they pay the City of North Augusta for their waste disposal and do not use the Tri County transfer station. Councilman Dorn seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Councilman Dorn made the motion to approve second reading of Ordinance No. 05-06-571, "An Ordinance Amending the FY 05-06 General Operating Budget to Provide for Capital Expenditures Related to the Acquisition of Road Maintenance Equipment." Councilman Hudson seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

The Council next considered Ordinance No. 05-06-572, "An Ordinance to Develop a Jointly Owned and Operated Industrial/Business Park in Conjunction with Aiken County, Such Industrial/Business Park to be Geographically Located in Edgefield County and the City of Trenton and Established Pursuant to South Carolina Code of Laws of 1976 §4-1-170, ET Sequitur, as Amended: to Provide for a Written Agreement with Aiken County Providing for the Expenses of the Park, the Percentage of Revenue Application, and the Distribution of Fees in Lieu of *Ad Valorem* Taxes to the Counties and Relevant Taxing Entities; to Provide That Jobs Tax Credits Allowed by Law Be Provided for Businesses Locating in Said Park; to Permit User Fee in Lieu of *Ad Vlorem* Taxation Within Said Park; and Other Matters Related Thereto," Ms. Dawn Baetson, a company representative of Trenton Plastics, LLC, addressed council."

Prior to any motion, Ms. Dawn Baetson (Trenton Plastics representative) informed Council that the project is much stronger now than it was when council first heard about it in May. "There is new capital injection, new investors, and very big plans for that plant, even some (possibilities for) expansion. They (the company) have cleaned the inside of the plant and getting the machines ready for production. They will add a warehouse to make more room in the existing plant for more machinery and equipment for blow molding machines and plastic injection molding machines. They are also planning in a couple of years to add a powdered coating operation, which will integrate the products that they are making and powder coating them. That puts the nice shiny paint look on some of the parts that will go on to the machinery and equipment .Additionally, they are

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes

October 4, 2005

going to start doing some research and development at the facility for specific companies like Exxon, BASF, and GE.. So, there is a lot more planned for this plant than what was originally (planned) when it was first purchased. That is due to new ownership. A couple of the things we are asking the County to support is the job development application that is going to be reviewed on Thursday by the State, and we would also like your favorable consideration for the payment in lieu of tax, because of all of the investment that will be going in there. Their expectations are that, with the existing plant running at full capacity and with the powder coating, they are anticipating 190 jobs in the plant with all of the expansion that will go on within the next two to four years. We are all very excited about it, and with council's help we can make this happen for that plant." The average wage will be at least at the county average wage, which is \$10.17 per hour.

Councilman Dorn's concern was about what would keep the company from just up and leaving – same as what happened not long ago with another company. Ms. Baetson replied that if you looked at this project from today, as it stands, as opposed to when the owner came in and purchased the closed facility, there is a lot more commitment on the part of the equity investors. (They provide) a very strong financial position, the ability to seek bank financing, and the ability to generate orders necessary to make that company a go. One of the things the new investors looked at was how can we make this plant a go. One of the decisions was about adding powder coating. Adding this makes for an integrated process, something that will improve the plant's prospects.

Mr. Dorn asked the Administrator whether the plant would be here for a while without paying taxes. Mr. Adams said if they were here with no deal (FILOT) they would get an abatement from county operations for five years, but the plant will pay taxes (to county operations) as a result of the Fee in Lieu of Taxes agreement. They are not technically paying ad valorem taxes under the deal, they are paying fees in lieu of taxes. We will get those up front. It will be based on at least a 5 million dollar investment, maybe as much as seven. That will be at a 6% assessment ratio, and then you apply the millage to that figure.

Motion was made by Councilman Hudson, seconded by Councilman Bright, to approve first reading of Ordinance No. 05-06-572. Motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Dorn made a motion, seconded by Councilman Kitchens, to approve first reading of Ordinance No. 05-06-573, An Ordinance Authorizing a Fee-in-Lieu of Tax Arrangement on Behalf of Trenton Plastics, LLC (The "Company") Pursuant to a Fee Agreement between Edgefield County, South Carolina (The "County") and The Company; and Other Matters Relating to the Foregoing." Motion carried unanimously.

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes

October 4, 2005

Resolutions

Motion was made by Councilman Hudson, seconded by Councilman Kitchens, to approve Resolution No. 05-06-285, "A Resolution Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of An Inducement Agreement By and Between Edgefield County, South Carolina, and Trenton Plastics, LLC Whereby, Under Certain Conditions, Trenton Plastics, LLC Will Acquire, or Purchase, Certain Equipment to Improve and Expand Its Facilities in Edgefield County and Edgefield County Will Execute Fee-in-Lieu of Tax or Lease Agreement(s) and Provide Certain Economic Development Inducements to Trenton Plastics, LLC and Execute Certain Documents and Enact Certain Further Legislation for Trenton Plastics, LLC'S Project Involving a Total of Not Less Than Five Million Dollars (\$5,000,000) in Investment." Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Councilman Dorn, seconded by Councilman Kitchens, to approve Resolution No. 05-06-284, "A Resolution Honoring Bob Bowie Upon His Retirement from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and for His Valuable Contributions to the Betterment of Edgefield County." Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution No. 05-06-286, "A Resolution Renewing Northland Cable Television Franchise" was considered. Mr. Adams informed council that he had spoken with the district manager. While most of their customers are within the city limits of Edgefield, some reside outside the city. At this time, the company owes us approximately \$3100 in back payments for past years under the existing franchise. Council may wish to have that cleared before having the renewal resolution read. Chairman Kneece stated he would like to postpone approving the resolution until the County collects the funds. Chairman Kneece made the motion to table, seconded by Councilman Dorn. Motion carried.

New Business

Bill Gilchrist, County Auditor, addressed council concerning the millage rate for the current tax year. The millage rates will all stay the same for 2005 except for the EMS levy, which will drop four mills. The county millage rate this year will be 305.56 – last year it was 309.56. The value of a mill increased about 2.6% under county operations. The road fee implemented in July will generate about \$180,000 to \$190,000 a year.

The books will open around October 19 or 20th. We will start calculating tomorrow and looking at numbers and samples of bills. The local option credit will be down some because we will have more residential homes to put that credit on.

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes October 4, 2005

Mr. Gilchrist spoke on third reading of Ordinance No. 05-06-586 concerning the Solid Waste User Charges. He explained the changes from his perspective, and from the perspective of collecting the taxes, and the delinquent charges will be the same as for regular property taxes. In the past, the real estate bills showed a fee of \$80, which it is now. This new ordinance establishes a (late-pay) penalty that is the same as for delinquent taxes. The first penalty date will include the garbage fee amount. Up to this point, you were penalized on the tax amount but not on an unpaid garbage fee. When you got into the second penalty date you were then assessed a \$10 late charge on the unpaid fee. The new state law, passed in June of this year, requires that all fees be paid when the tax bill is due. Likewise, when you come in to pay your vehicle bill you will have to pay the road maintenance fee, or you will not be able to pay your taxes.

The value of a mill at the present is approximately \$48, 487 – about a \$1257 increase from last year.

Piedmont Tech

Dr. Lex Walters, Don Howard, Jim Klauber, and Kate Plowden of Piedmont Technical College were present to address council concerning a new program for the Edgefield Center. Dr. Walters stated that Piedmont Tech is establishing a *Professional Clay Program* and a *Center for Creative Economies* in Edgefield County. The role of crafts and tourism is an important one in a successful, creative economy.

In the fall of 2006, training will begin for individuals interested in becoming professional clay artisans (pottery classes). Mr. Bettis Rainsford, the donor of the buildings at the local campus is allowing Piedmont Tech to use another building on the premises to house this new program.

Edgefield is a rural community uniquely poised to build and support a new creative economy based on its history and location, which is a great basis for this new program. They are applying for a grant as well as seeking private donations. Dr. Walters said they would be asking for monetary support from the county in the future, and thanked council for their continued support.

Heritage Drive and Williams Road

Heritage Drive is located just off Williams Road, which is off Highway 25, south of Edgefield. Ms. Belinda Cooper explained the condition of Heritage Drive, which is in a sandy area of the county; she also stated that the road sign for Williams Road is missing. The County put clay on the road at one time, Ms. Cooper said, but that did not help the situation.

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes

October 4, 2005

Howard Gibson, Transportation Committee/Road Department, addressed this issue. He stated that he had left a couple of messages on Ms. Cooper's telephone. They agreed they had talked about this about a year ago, and that Mr. Gibson would try to get it (the road) on the (paving) list. He said that it is tied in with Padgett Road, which will save approximately \$20,000, and hopefully the paving will be done before the first of the year. It is a problem road, as all sand roads are. They are very difficult to maintain. The paving of the road is a budgeted item. The specs are ready but waiting on the engineer to finalize the drainage for Padgett Road, and once that is done invitation for bids will go out – hopefully within the next month. After the bids are out they have 120 days to do the work. All of this will come from "C" funds. Mr. Gibson acknowledged there is a problem with Heritage Drive and Ms. Cooper has been waiting a long time and that he appreciates her concern.

PARD funding for FY 2006

PARD distribution for FY 2006 is based on the 2000 census. The Town of Johnston had their 2000 census number adjusted up by sixty-four (64) persons, according to the Census Bureau. The total funding allocated (for the entire county) was \$22,693.38. That was divided among three municipalities, Bettis Park and the Northside Park project. Motion was made by Councilman Dorn, seconded by Councilman Bright, to approve the distribution of these funds as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

DNA Testing.

Edgefield County Coroner Thurmond Burnett addressed council on a coroner's case involving a body found in Edgefield County. The person had been missing approximately thirty (30) days. A positive ID has not been made, and it is still being determined as to whether or not it was a natural death. Testing is being done this week by fingerprinting for ID – hard though because of the condition of the body. If this does not work, the next step would be DNA testing, and the problem there is it would go to the FBI, which could possibly take six months before determining any results. Private DNA testing would only take approximately six weeks. This would speed things up for the family and the county. It is very expensive to go with a private source for DNA testing. Each sample – there could be several for one body – is \$1800.00. If you want the results, which amounts to six weeks, you have to send another \$500. We are talking in the neighborhood of \$5000.00. Mr. Burnett asked the county to consider funding for a private source if it comes down to this for identification, if the fingerprinting does not work. But, if a fingerprint match cannot be obtained, then we will have to go to DNA.

Consensus of council was to wait for results from the fingerprinting. Then, if necessary, it would vote on approving funding at a called meeting.

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL
Minutes
October 4, 2005

Equipment and Vehicles to be auctioned.

Council surplussed the heavy equipment that will be going to auction on October 20th. We are trying to clean up the shop area. Council has to, by law, surplus whatever the staff might sell of county property. On the vehicles, the county will go through J. M. Wood, the same company that will auction the equipment. This will be done over the internet. The equipment will sit right where it is and anybody will be able to bid on line to purchase it. Whoever buys it will have to remove it. Motion was made by Chairman Kneece, seconded by Councilman Dorn, to proceed with the auction. Motion carried.

Mobile concessions stand for Bettis Park

Councilman Bright had in his possession some information concerning concession stands. Of course, specs will have to be written as to the size and features needed. The money that was budgeted for Bettis Park included the concession stand. No dollar amount was specified, because at the time actual prices were not known. The price was believed to be in a range of \$30,000 to \$50,000. Some money was saved on the lights for the football field and we think lights can be done cheaper than had been planned for the two softball fields. Mr. Bright indicated that about \$30,000-\$35,000 had been saved on the lights for the football field and the scoreboard.

Mr. Kneece suggested that Mr. Bright get in touch with the companies and get some figures and specifications on what he wants and bring it back before council.

Councilman Kitchens. "You said we saved money on the lights and the scoreboard and other, and evidently we saved more money down there by doing a lot of the work ourselves. Do we know how much money we yet have to spend down at Bettis and how much money we will have left to consider concession stands? We did the work down there clearing the land, so what is that going to credit back to county, I guess is what I am saying."

"We have a budget of \$350,000 for Bettis Park and that was to clear two softball fields, lights, fence, and quite a bit of work down there. Now, the land has been cleared by the road department, and we saved money on the lighting and other facilities down there. What I am asking is how much money have we saved that we can put into the purchase or building a concession stand or how much money have we saved that we can put into other areas of the recreation department. How much more money do we have to spend to get Bettis where we planned for it to be? We know how much money was appropriated for the work that has been done down there and how much money has been saved. You said we saved money by doing the work ourselves which cost us somewhere."

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes

October 4, 2005

Mr. Bright responded that the bid on the lights was something like \$53,000-\$54,000, but that the county put them up for less than \$25,000. The County installed the scoreboard for \$1,000 instead of \$4,000.

Mr. Kitchens asked the administrator if we could get an accounting of what has been spent, what has been saved, and how much money we have to go – and, Councilman Hudson stated, what we have left to do so we know where we stand on the money as farMr. Bright said it depends on how efficiently we spend the money as to how much can be done with the \$350,000. Clearing has been done on the fields.

Mr. Adams said that another thing that staff needs is a determination on the specs for a concession trailer; we need to know at least what we would have to pay for it in the worst case.

The Chairman requested that the administrator get a rundown on the money that is remaining, as well as expenditures to date, and give a full report at the November meeting including prices on a mobile unit and a permanent building. All members were in favor.

Council/School Board meeting

Joint meetings are held twice a year, each entity hosting one meeting. Chairman Kneece asked council members if they wanted to continue meeting twice a year, or would they like to go to once a year. The consensus of council was to continue meeting twice a year. The next meeting was then scheduled for Wednesday, October 19th, at 6:00 PM at the Sertoma Club in Johnston – Edgefield County Council hosting the meeting.

Old Business

State Road 453

SCDOT wants to abandon a portion of this road (State Road 453) to the County's ownership. This would be with the understanding that the County would then abandon the roadway to a church. SCDOT officials say they are prohibited from transferring the road directly to the church. The roadway under consideration extends to Mt. Pleasant Church off Steeple Road. Mr. Lewis Jackson (from the church) addressed Council in September concerning this matter; Council requested more information in lieu of making a decision at that time.

Chairman Kneece stated that he received a telephone call from Mr. Padgett (SCDOT) that he could not be here tonight and wanted the matter postponed until Council's November meeting. Council was in agreement.

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL
Minutes
October 4, 2005

At this time, Councilman Dorn had an item to bring before Council. He stated that Mr. Stevens, a co-worker of his, told him of a bridge located off Long Cane Road (Jimmy Road) that the school bus will not travel due to the condition of the bridge. Mr. Dorn stated that, for safety purposes, something should be done to the bridge.

Howard Gibson addressed this. He stated that this had been an issue before he became involved. It is a very expensive bridge to redo. The Administrator asked if this is the road where the family has to travel back into Saluda County to have a safe route to take the children to school. The reply from Mr. Gibson was yes. Mr. Adams said he did not remember the cost of the bridge but we can get an estimate.

Councilman Dorn then called for a discussion of activities in the Solicitor's office, and of that office's accountability to the citizens and taxpayers. He stated he feels strongly that this is not an issue that should just die or go away.

No guests.

No executive session.

Claims approved as follows:

A.	PAYROLL:	9/29/05 thru 9/11/05	
	Regular.....		\$188,859.51
	PAYROLL:	9/12/05 thru 9/25/05	
	Regular.....		\$193,664.11
B.	General		
	Operating.....		\$723,503.57

There being no further business, Councilman Dorn made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Hudson. Motion carried. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 1, 2005, in the County Council Chambers, 225 Jeter St., Edgefield.

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL
Minutes
October 4, 2005

C. Monroe Kneece, Chairman

Willie C. Bright, Vice Chairman

Norman Dorn, Councilman

Joel D. Hudson, Councilman

B. Everette Kitchens, Council

ATTEST

Barbara R. Stark, Clerk to Council

